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18 January 1967

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

SUBJECT: Visit to NRO Regarding Vulnerability Analysis

REFERENCE: [Redacted] dated 19 December 1966
To: Director of Reconnaissance, CIA
From: National Reconnaissance Office
Subject: Aircraft/Drone Vulnerability Studies

1. On Tuesday, 17 January, I visited the NRO to obtain an initial orientation and the ground rules relating to the vulnerability analysis requested of the Agency in the reference. I met with Col. Clason Saunders, [Redacted] of the NRO Staff in [Redacted] office. I explained the purpose of my visit and Col. Saunders gave some of the background leading to the tasking of the Agency.

2. We then discussed in a general way the desired objectives and approach. It was agreed that speed was a critical element, but that we should take the time to do it right. The analysis was to use consistent models for comparability and insofar as possible, a consistent set of input data. It was agreed that the determination of this consistent set of input data was difficult. Col. Saunders said that the various projects would provide all the data needed, and we had only to ask. I stated that what was needed was a need-to-know and access to the respective organizations since only by a detailed knowledge of the sources of the input parameters could comparability be assured. I said that perhaps the Agency should not perform this task as this might raise questions as to the validity of the results.

3. We then discussed some of the ground rules for the study. I was assured that the committee approach specified in the reference was not desired, partly because it was not a committee problem and also because of the extremely high clearance levels involved. [Redacted] indicated that they strongly desired to use [Redacted] in this effort. He gave several reasons for this. They are generally experienced and

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25X1A knowledgeable, they have funds and an existing contract, and he wants [REDACTED] to apply the procedures and techniques to other Air Force problems. He stressed that this effort was intended to be a continuing one under Agency leadership and emphasized that Dr. Flax had indicated a strong desire to keep the Agency involved.

25X1A 4. [REDACTED] said that he had already initiated clearance procedures for three [REDACTED] people, [REDACTED] being mentioned by name. He felt that discussions and tasking at [REDACTED] should wait until our plans are more firm. 25X1A

25X1A 5. I said that we would be back to them shortly for further discussions after we had considered the problem further. [REDACTED] was designated as the point of contact. 25X1A

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(S) NATIONAL RECONNAISSANCE OFFICE
WASHINGTON, D.C.

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OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR

December 19, 1966

MEMORANDUM FOR THE DIRECTOR OF RECONNAISSANCE, CIA

SUBJECT: Aircraft/Drone Vulnerability Studies

Vulnerability studies of specific aircraft and drones generally have been made as individual studies or on the basis of comparison of relatively similar reconnaissance vehicles. Most of the extensive vulnerability effort on each system has been directed at supporting the design of ECM subsystems; hence, the vulnerability analyses have to some degree been conditioned by the differing approaches to the specific ECM employed. As a result of questions raised, particularly by Dr. Hornig, at recent EXCOM meetings, it is apparent that there is a need for a comprehensive, quantitative vulnerability study which will provide probable survivability estimates of various systems on a comparable basis.

In response to this need, I request that CIA chair a joint CIA/DOD study group to accomplish the comparative vulnerability study. I believe that the CIA Vulnerability Analysis Group is best qualified to take the lead in this effort. Maximum use should be made of the NRO Staff, the Air Staff, the Foreign Technology Division of AFSC, and NSA as members of the study group and in support of the effort in order to assure a unified community agreement on the validity of the study.

The study should include the SR-71, U-2R, OXCART, TAGBOARD and COMPASS ARROW systems. These systems should be tested against standard point and area defensive models (either known or predicted) in the areas of expected operational utilization for both present day defenses and against projections of defenses five to ten years hence.

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A standard data base of aircraft parameters affecting the analyses should be established. The studies should include survivability/vulnerability estimates with and without ECM equipments installed or programmed for the several systems.

Although the need for the detailed information is pressing, I do not intend to suggest any deadline which might detract from the accuracy or completeness of the study. However, I would appreciate it if you would submit to me by December 28th the composition of the joint CIA/DOD study group and an outline of the proposed study plan along with an estimated time table to be followed. The NRO Staff will assist you in arranging for DOD participation and in such other ways as you request.

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Alexander H. Flax

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